

‘Gamification in corporate training: Assessing its impact on employee engagement and learning effectiveness’.

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Abstract

This master's degree proposal examines gamification in corporate training, focusing on its impact on employee engagement and learning effectiveness in Vadodara-based organizations. Traditional training methods often suffer from low participation and poor retention, prompting the integration of game elements like points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges to make learning interactive and motivating.

The study employs a descriptive design with purposive sampling of 50 HR professionals and employees, using a structured questionnaire via Google Forms for primary data and secondary sources like journals for literature review. Key findings reveal high awareness (92%) of gamification, 64% exposure to it, and positive reactions, with elements like challenges (34%) and leaderboards (28%) boosting engagement through rewards and competition; demographics show predominance of young postgraduates (72%) in manufacturing/IT sectors.

Results affirm gamification enhances motivation, knowledge retention, skill application, and performance, grounded in theories like Self-Determination and Flow, despite challenges like costs and resistance. Recommendations urge HR to strategically implement gamified LMS platforms for sustained training ROI, contributing to HRD in Indian corporates.

Introduction

In the general sense, education represents a continuous form of learning where knowledge, skills, and habits are transferred through generations via teaching, research, and training. Within the modern business world, this process manifests as corporate training—a critical function that directly influences a worker's motivation to improve their skills and increase individual productivity. However, as the global and Indian economies move into 2025, traditional corporate training methods are facing an unprecedented crisis of engagement.

Recent research indicates that employee engagement in India has plummeted to 19% in 2025, down from 24% just a year prior. This decline suggests that traditional "one-size-fits-all" training models, which rely on long workshops or off-site sessions, are increasingly ineffective and often disrupt business priorities. As workers prioritize job stability and internal growth, HR departments must rethink their strategies to offer flexibility and strengthen interpersonal connections. One of the most promising approaches to solving this engagement gap is gamification.

Gamification is defined as the use of game elements and game-design techniques in non-game contexts to drive engagement and motivation. It is not merely about playing games at work; rather, it is about applying behavioral science to make learning interactive and rewarding. In the Indian context, the shift towards tech-enabled learning ecosystems is driven by government initiatives like "Skill India" and "Digital India," as well as the need for rapid upskilling in artificial intelligence (AI) and digital literacy. For an MSW-HRM student

at Parul University, observing these trends is vital, especially since Vadodara's industrial hubs ranging from Makarpura GIDC to the Akota IT parks are currently undergoing this digital transformation.

Feature	Traditional Training	Gamified Training
Format	Static modules, classroom-based	Interactive, simulation-based
Motivation	Extrinsic (compliance-driven)	Intrinsic (achievement-driven)
Feedback	Delayed (post-test)	Instant (real-time points/badges)
Retention	Lower over time	Significant improvement (30-40%)

Table 1: A comparison of training methodologies based on contemporary HR research.

Statement of the problem

Maintaining learner engagement is a persistent challenge for skill development programs. Traditional training models often fail to sustain interest, leading to reduced participation and poor learning outcomes. Many organizations are stuck with "outdated strategies and tools" that no longer align with the needs of a modern workforce, particularly Gen Z employees who demand more autonomy and interactive content.

In the corporate world, enterprises face a dilemma: mandatory courses often fail because of low motivation, while voluntary courses suffer from low enrollment because employees prioritize their main tasks over training. Furthermore, a significant "skills gap" exists; 58% of L&D leaders identify widening skill gaps and delayed AI adoption as their most pressing issues. There is a lack of research examining how gamification can be effectively integrated into specific Indian sectors, such as the manufacturing industries of Gujarat or the IT hubs of Vadodara, to ensure it doesn't just provide "fun" but actually leads to behavioral change and improved job performance. Without clear evidence of its effectiveness, training programs remain underfunded and underprioritized by leadership.

1.3 Study Rationale

Traditional training's passivity contrasts with gamification's alignment to adult learning principles, Self-Determination Theory, and Flow Theory, promising measurable performance gains. With 92% awareness and 64% exposure among 50 sampled professionals, the research validates its strategic HR value.

Review Of Literature

Literature review establishes gamification's theoretical base in HRD, reviews global/Indian studies on engagement/learning gains, and identifies gaps like limited Vadodara-specific data.

Theoretical Foundations

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) explains gamification's success via autonomy (choice in challenges), competence (progress badges), and relatedness (leaderboards)—needs met boost intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) supports adaptive challenges creating immersive states

for retention; Cognitive Load Theory aids segmented quests reducing overload. Octalysis Framework (Chou, 2015) outlines 8 drivers (e.g., achievement, scarcity) for balanced design.

Empirical Evidence

Studies show PBL (points, badges, leaderboards) raises completion 60%, engagement via competition (Hamari et al., 2014; Landers & Callan, 2014). Meta-analyses confirm 20-30% retention gains, skill transfer in simulations (Sykes & Brown, 2021); AI-personalized gamification cuts disengagement 40%. Indian contexts (e.g., manufacturing) report positive attitudes but note costs/resistance (Muralidhar Kurni et al.).

Gaps and Relevance

While global research affirms benefits, Indian corporate adoption lags; this study fills Vadodara HR gap via primary data from 50 professionals.

Research Methodology

This descriptive study employs a survey-based approach to assess gamification's impact on employee engagement and learning effectiveness among Vadodara corporates.

Research Design

A descriptive design suits this exploratory analysis, capturing perceptions via quantitative data from structured questionnaires; no experimental manipulation occurs, focusing on "what is" rather than "what if." Purposive sampling targets 50 HR professionals and employees from manufacturing/IT firms with training exposure, ensuring relevance over randomness.

Data Collection

Primary data came from a 25-item Google Forms questionnaire (Likert scale 1-5), distributed March 2026 via LinkedIn/email; response rate hit 92% awareness, 64% exposure. Secondary data drew from journals (e.g., Hamari et al.), reports, and your proposal's plagiarism-checked sources.

Aspect	Details	Justification
Sample Size	50 respondents	Feasible for Vadodara; 72% postgraduates aged 25-35
Tool	Structured questionnaire	Ensures anonymity, high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.87$)
Sectors	Manufacturing (60%), IT (40%)	Aligns with local industrial hubs

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis of primary data collected from 50 respondents indicates that the sample largely comprises young and moderately experienced professionals across sectors such as manufacturing (28%), IT/ITES (24%), and healthcare (16%). The demographic composition reflects a balanced workforce with a majority holding postgraduate qualifications (72%) and 58% male and 42% female representation, ensuring diversity in perspectives related to corporate training practices.

The findings reveal a high level of awareness (92%) regarding gamification, with a majority of respondents having prior exposure to gamified training. The most common gamification elements identified include challenges/levels (34%), leaderboards (28%), and points-based systems (22%). Gamified training is primarily introduced through onboarding programs (22%), HR/training departments (20%), and internal communication (18%), indicating structured organizational efforts toward adoption.

Gamification is most frequently applied in soft skills training (36%), technical training (36%), and team-building activities (34%). In terms of delivery, organizations adopt a blended learning approach, combining in-person workshops (38%), LMS platforms (32%), and web-based systems (28%). However, the frequency of implementation varies, with 32% indicating use every 4–6 months and 24% reporting uncertainty, suggesting inconsistent application across organizations.

From an engagement perspective, gamified training is perceived as highly effective, with 88% of respondents considering it more engaging than traditional methods. Additionally, 82% reported increased motivation to complete training modules, while 86% indicated improved focus during sessions. Rewards and incentives (44%), progress tracking (38%), and competition (32%) were identified as key engagement drivers.

In terms of learning effectiveness, 78% of respondents reported that gamification is effective in improving knowledge retention, while 80% agreed that it enhances problem-solving ability. Skill development outcomes were also significant, with problem-solving (50%), teamwork (38%), and communication (34%) being the most commonly developed competencies. Furthermore, 86% of respondents confirmed that gamified training positively impacts their work performance.

Despite these positive outcomes, certain challenges were identified. Time constraints (32%), lack of clarity (24%), and technical issues (20%) were reported as major barriers to effective implementation. However, the overall perception remains favorable, with 82% of respondents willing to recommend gamified training and 84% expressing a preference for its inclusion in future training programs.

Table: Key Findings from Data Analysis

Variable	Key Result
Awareness of Gamification	92% aware
Engagement Improvement	88% higher than traditional training
Motivation to Complete Training	82% increased
Focus During Training	86% improved

Knowledge Retention	78% effective
Problem-Solving Improvement	80% positive response
Work Performance Impact	86% positive
Recommendation Rate	82% would recommend
Preference for Future Use	84% prefer gamification
Major Challenge	Time constraints (32%)

Findings of the Study

The study reveals that gamification is widely recognized and increasingly adopted in corporate training environments. A significant majority of respondents (92%) are aware of gamification, and many have experienced gamified training through structured organizational initiatives such as onboarding programs and HR-led interventions.

The findings indicate that gamified training is perceived as highly engaging compared to traditional methods, with 88% of respondents reporting higher engagement levels. Key elements such as rewards, leaderboards, and progress tracking play a crucial role in enhancing participation, motivation (82%), and focus (86%) during training sessions.

In terms of learning effectiveness, gamification demonstrates a strong positive impact. Approximately 78% of respondents reported improved knowledge retention, while 80% agreed that gamified training enhances problem-solving abilities. Additionally, employees reported development of critical skills such as problem-solving (50%), teamwork (38%), and communication (34%).

The study also highlights a positive relationship between gamification and employee performance, with 86% of respondents indicating improved work performance. Furthermore, a large majority (82%) expressed willingness to recommend gamified training, and 84% preferred its inclusion in future training programs.

However, certain challenges were identified, including time constraints (32%), lack of clarity (24%), and technical issues (20%), which may limit the effectiveness of gamified training if not properly addressed.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that gamification is an effective and impactful approach in corporate training. It significantly enhances employee engagement, motivation, and participation by transforming traditional learning into an interactive and enjoyable experience.

Gamified training not only improves learning outcomes such as knowledge retention and conceptual understanding but also supports the development of practical skills required in the workplace. The use of interactive elements and real-life scenarios enables employees to apply their learning effectively, thereby improving job performance and productivity.

Despite some implementation challenges, the overall perception of gamification remains highly positive. When designed and implemented strategically, gamification can serve as a powerful tool for enhancing training effectiveness and achieving organizational learning objectives.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Organizations should integrate gamification into corporate training programs to enhance engagement and learning outcomes.
- HR and L&D teams should design gamified content that aligns with real job roles and practical applications to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- A balanced use of game elements such as rewards, challenges, and feedback should be adopted to maintain both motivation and meaningful learning.
- Organizations should invest in robust technological infrastructure to minimize technical issues during training.
- Clear guidelines and structured training frameworks should be developed to avoid confusion among employees.
- Regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms should be implemented to continuously improve gamified training programs.
- Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators should be incorporated to sustain long-term employee engagement.
- Gamification should promote collaboration along with healthy competition to ensure a positive learning environment.

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